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Strengthening of the United Nations system

Financial, administrative and budgetary implications arising from the appointment of the High Representative and the implementation of the mandates assigned to the Office for Disarmament Affairs

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/257 on strengthening the capacity of the Organization to advance the disarmament agenda, the General Assembly affirmed its support for the establishment of an Office for Disarmament Affairs, while maintaining the budgetary autonomy and the integrity of the existing structures and functions of the current Department for Disarmament Affairs, and the appointment of a High Representative as the head of the Office for Disarmament Affairs at the rank of Under-Secretary-General.

2. In paragraph 3 of the resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report, as soon as possible following the appointment of the High Representative, in accordance with established procedures, on the financial, administrative and budgetary implications arising from the appointment of the High Representative and the implementation of the mandates assigned to the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

3. The present report is submitted pursuant to the above-mentioned requests.

II. Strengthening the United Nations capacity to advance the disarmament agenda

4. The dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction and by the excessive accumulation of conventional weapons are well known. This makes our limited progress in addressing these concerns all the more disappointing. The failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of

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Nuclear Weapons, the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament and the disappointing outcome of the 2006 United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects all point to a disheartening trend.

5. Addressing current challenges in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation demands renewed multilateral attention, understanding and cooperation. It also requires the strengthening of existing treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation. Neither disarmament nor non-proliferation is an end in itself. Together, they offer an indispensable means to strengthen international peace and security and to achieve general and complete disarmament. While States can undertake many constructive initiatives unilaterally, bilaterally, plurilaterally and regionally, the current global challenges in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation require sustained, multilateral cooperation involving all countries.

6. From the Secretary-General's first day in office, revitalizing the international disarmament agenda and the United Nations effectiveness in this area has been a personal priority. That is why the Secretary-General proposed a new Office for Disarmament Affairs, led by a High Representative, which would better mobilize the political will necessary to overcome the current stalemate and re-energize action on both disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

III. Financial, administrative and budgetary implications arising from the appointment of the High Representative

7. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 61/257 the General Assembly stressed that the Office for Disarmament Affairs would fully implement the relevant mandates, decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly.

8. The Office for Disarmament Affairs retained the five branches and functions of the Department for Disarmament Affairs and continued to implement existing mandates. The Office continues to provide substantive and organizational support for norm-setting in the area of disarmament through the work of the General Assembly and its First Committee, the Disarmament Commission, the Conference on Disarmament and other bodies, with the aim of responding effectively to the priorities of Member States in the disarmament and non-proliferation area and ensuring effective interaction with the General Assembly, the Security Council and other legislative bodies.

9. The managerial reorganization of the former Department for Disarmament Affairs into the Office for Disarmament Affairs, with a direct line of communication to the Secretary-General, ensures effective interaction between his Office and the relevant departments of the United Nations

10. In July 2007, Sergio de Queiroz Duarte was appointed by the Secretary-General as the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

11. The functions of the High Representative focus on four core areas:

(a) Policy development and coordination functions in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects in support of the Secretary-General;

(b) Advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation issues with Member States and civil society;

(c) Promotion and support of multilateral efforts on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons;

(d) Promotion and support of disarmament efforts in the field of conventional disarmament, especially with regard to major weapons systems, small arms and light weapons and landmines.

12. Given that the Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to implement the existing mandates derived from relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and other policymaking organs, and that the position of the High Representative remains at the level of Under-Secretary-General, the Secretary-General wishes to inform the Member States that there are no financial, administrative and budgetary implications arising from the appointment of the High Representative.

13. Regarding the implementation of the mandates assigned to the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the objectives and the allocation of responsibilities for the current year are consistent with the approved programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. The Office will continue to carry out its activities as approved in the proposed strategic framework for the period 2008-2009 (see A/61/6 (Prog. 3)).

14. The implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/257 does not entail any additional resources under section 4, Disarmament, of the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 or the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009.

15. In accordance with paragraph 5 of resolution 61/257, the Secretary-General will submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session in order that it may review the implementation of the resolution.

16. The Secretary-General's bulletin entitled "Organization of the Department for Disarmament Affairs" (ST/SGB/2004/12) will be replaced with bulletin entitled "Organization of the Office for Disarmament Affairs" for the purpose of reflecting the establishment of the Office pursuant to resolution 61/257 and in line with the mandates derived from the General Assembly.

17. With regard to the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 61/257 for the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the activities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, it should be noted that the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs made a statement in the First Committee on 16 October 2007, informing the Committee of the activities of the Office.

18. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.**